

Given the objections we have just heard, it appears as though we will need to file cloture on the measure to assure a vote on the conference report. That cloture vote will occur on January 20. It is my hope that during this period Members will take the additional time to review it so everyone can fully understand the importance of much of the funding in this legislation.

**AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004—CONFERENCE REPORT**

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 2673, the omnibus bill, for the purpose of filing cloture. I further ask consent that following the filing of cloture on the conference report, the Senate then proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Committee of Conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2673), making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes, having met, have agreed that the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate, and agree to the same with an amendment, signed by a majority of the conferees on the part of both Houses.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will proceed to the consideration of the conference report.

(The conference report is printed in the proceedings of the House in the RECORD of November 25, 2003.)

**CLOTURE MOTION**

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, for the reasons stated earlier, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

**CLOTURE MOTION**

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2673, a bill making appropriations for the Department of Agriculture and Related Agencies for fiscal year 2004, and for other purposes:

Bill Frist, Rick Santorum, George Allen, Robert F. Bennett, Jon Kyl, Ted Stevens, Kay Bailey Hutchison, Ben Nighthorse Campbell, Mitch McConnell, Judd Gregg, Orrin G. Hatch, John Cornyn, Christopher Bond, Saxby Chambliss, Sam Brownback, Larry E. Craig, Richard Shelby.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived and, further, that notwithstanding rule XXII, this cloture vote occur on January 20 at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

**UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—  
H.R. 2800**

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H.R. 2800, the Foreign Operations appropriations bill, as passed by the Senate on October 30, that all after the enacting clause be stricken and the text of division D of H.R. 2673, the omnibus appropriations bill, be inserted in lieu thereof, the bill be read the third time, passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, without intervening action or debate.

Mr. FRIST. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, I think much of what is in the Foreign Operations bill and part of the real focus of the proposed unanimous consent request is on global HIV/AIDS funding. As most in this body know, I do believe HIV/AIDS has presented the greatest moral, humanitarian, and public health challenge of really the last 100 years, if you look at the impact it is having.

We are under a continuing resolution and I have looked very closely to make sure that sufficient moneys will not be interrupted over the intervening period of time. Indeed, there is sufficient money that has not been allocated in the appropriate funds that can be used and that would cover the increment of the next 1 month in terms of funding.

Again, it is important for colleagues and others to understand we will be operating under a continuing resolution and the funding that is currently being appropriated, given to the organizations and to serve the needs of the people, will continue and there can be increased funding allocated within the appropriate categories to cover that increment over time for HIV/AIDS funding.

With that, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

**UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—  
S. 1853**

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the legislative session, that the Finance Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 1853, a bill to extend unemployment insurance benefits for displaced workers, that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration, the bill be read the third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. FRIST. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, the unemploy-

ment insurance is an issue we will continue to discuss with our colleagues. The House has not yet acted on unemployment insurance. It is an issue we will continue to have under discussion as we go forward.

With that said, I do object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

**OMNIBUS SPENDING BILL**

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, unless the majority leader has additional comments, I wish to take a few moments to address my concerns about the current draft of the appropriations bill.

I believe the appropriations process has fallen apart. This is a Frankenstein monster of a bill born of a badly broken process. It is time to send it back to the laboratory.

At the beginning of the year, we were told the White House and the Senate Republican leadership would make sure the appropriations process ran more smoothly than ever before. In fact, the process broke down to an extent never seen before, opening the door to the worst kind of legislative abuses and special interest giveaways.

This bill, this monstrosity, combines 7 appropriations bills, including 11 of 15 Cabinet-level Departments, comprising \$820 billion in Government spending. To agree to a unanimous consent request this morning I believe would represent a shocking abrogation of our responsibilities to the people of this country. We have not finished until 2½ months into the fiscal year. This was supposed to have been done on October 1. It is now early December.

These delays are becoming regrettably common. But what makes this omnibus unique is its utter disregard for the expressed will of each House of Congress. The process was an abomination, closed largely to Democrats, hidden from the light of day, written to satisfy nothing more than special interest wish lists.

It didn't have to be this way. The Senate passed 12 of the 13 appropriations bills by wide bipartisan margins. The House passed 13 appropriations bills with wide margins. None of the bills posed difficulties. The only reason the process was handled this way was to ram through divisive provisions and pork spending that could never win the support of the Congress on their own.

I thank Chairman STEVENS and especially my ranking member, Senator BYRD, for the work they did to avoid this calamity. They understand the proper process and worked to employ it in this case. However, they were overruled by the White House and Republican leadership. That's why we find ourselves in this regrettable situation today.

This brand of legislating opens the door to the most ludicrous examples of pork spending, which has contributed to citizens' loss of faith in the process itself.